

DEDHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
REMOTE MEETING

MINUTES

April 1, 2020

(Approved 4/15/2020)

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT via REMOTE PARTICIPATION:

Kevin Coughlin, Chair
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair
Steve Bilafer
Mayanne Briggs
Joshua Donati
Dr. Melissa Pearrow
Tracey White

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE ABSENT:

None

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION REMOTELY PRESENT:

Michael Welch, Superintendent
Dr. Ian Kelly, Assistant Superintendent
Sam Rippin, Assistant Superintendent for Business & Finance

Meeting Location:

Per Governor Baker's order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. C. 30A sec. 20, the meeting was held via online Google Hangout Conference as posted on the agenda:

<https://meet.google.com/nhn-izyx-cni> or by phone, dial +1 515-599-7360 PIN: 341 281 120#

Remote meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Coughlin called the School Committee meeting to order. A roll call attendance was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Present
Mayanne Briggs - Present
Joshua Donati - Present
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Present
Tracey White - Present
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Present
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Present

Mr. Coughlin read the following statement regarding the remote meeting:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order concerning imposition on strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, meetings in the Town of Dedham are being conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. We have arranged for a call-in number for those who would like to listen to this meeting. While it is possible that some members of the public may be invited to comment, it is also possible that despite our best efforts, we are not able to provide for real-time involvement, we will post a recording of this meeting as soon as we are able.

Reports

Update on School Closure due to Coronavirus – Superintendent Michael J. Welch

Superintendent Welch thanked all educators and staff for continuing to work during this difficult time. He also thanked parents for homeschooling their students.

The Superintendent is working and moving forward with the acronym ECEC in mind

- E- Equity
- C- Communications
- E- Engagement
- C-Connections

He provided the following updates to the School Committee:

- Yesterday 250 students were served Food Service "Grab and Go" meals
- Comcast is offering free Internet and hotspot services
- All school buildings are closed to all non-essential personnel
- Central Office is open with limited staff during the week from 8:00am-1:00pm
- All educators are engaged and working from home
- Supt. Welch is working with the Dedham Education Association on a Memorandum of Agreement to create boundaries and balance for teacher work loads
- Technology, Counseling and Special Education departments are working on policies and procedures around parameters for two-way video
- Supt. Welch is working closely with other Town Boards to stay connected
- Mr. Rippin is working on projected impact costs for the remainder of FY20 and FY21 budgets

Dr. Pearrow stated she would like careful consideration given to how home/school work is being accounted for noting parents are doing the best they can. Supt. Welch stated that he is suggesting a credit or incomplete award system, which leaves the door open for students to complete work.

Ms. White complimented the School Department for being ahead of the curve in technology. Many other districts are following Dedham's lead. Supt. Welch thanked Dr. Ian Kelly and his staff for their work creating the Curriculum website.

Mr. Bilafer asked if there were ways the Committee could help. Supt. Welch noted his concern of budget timelines and hearings being pushed back and is worried on how this may affect the FY21 budget proposal. He asked if the Committee could stay connected with the public on this issue and engage their support.

Ms. Laprade stated that, as a parent, she feel sit has been very helpful to be included in teacher emails to students.

Discussion and Vote on Continued Pay for Dedham School Employees

Supt. Welch noted since the close of school on March 13, 2020 the School Department has continued to pay its employees. He is seeking a vote tonight to continue to pay staff.

Mr. Rippin elaborated on some budget items being taken into consideration

- Connolly Bus transportation costs for the month are approximately \$175,000
- He is working with a collaborative of 13 towns to create a settlement with Connolly that will satisfy both parties' needs
- The same type of settlement is being worked out for YCN and Van Pool transportation services
- Most districts are continuing to pay employees through May 1, 2020
- Other considerations- most employees are still working/working from home, unemployment is self-funded, not looking to furlough staff

Supt. Welch noted that he is looking for an endorsement to pay base salary only and does not include before and after care at the ECEC.

Mr. Donati asked if there will be lost revenue from bus fees. Mr. Rippin stated there would, but that the district does not rely heavily on these fees. He feels that the settlement with Connolly Bus will offset the lost funds.

Mr. Donati asked if the district were still collecting before and after school care fees at the ECEC. Mr. Rippin summed up the following with regards to fees:

- There will be lost revenue from lunch fees
- Bussing fees are \$1/day - any refunds provided will be based on that number
- Preschool/childcare tuition is billed monthly
 - March tuition has been collected
 - Not asking for April payments
 - People who paid in full will be in consideration for a refund

Mr. Bilafer asked if spring sports fees have been collected. Mr. Rippin stated that any spring sports fees collected would be in consideration for a refund if the season is cancelled.

Mr. Rippin will provide an overview of the implications to the FY20 and FY21 budget at the next meeting

Ms. White motioned to continue paying Dedham school employees during the school closure period, Ms. Laprade second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Old/New Business

Discussion and Vote on 2020 School Facilities Master Plan Update

Supt. Welch explained the 2020 update to the School Facilities Master Plan must be voted on and submitted with the Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority. The due date for the SOI has been pushed out to Wednesday, May 6. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the 2020 update to the School Facilities Master Plan, Mr. Bilafer second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Discussion of upcoming Student Opportunity Act (SOA) Chapter 70 Funding submission

Supt. Welch explained to the Committee that a district plan for the additional funds being received from the Student Opportunity Act was due to the Department of Education by April 1. The Commissioner of Education advised that a postponement of the due date is in legislation and a new date will be provided. A vote on the district's plan will be required by the Committee.

Discussion and Vote on Proposed Amendments to The Education Cooperative Collaborative Agreement

The Town of Medway has joined The Educational Cooperative (TEC), forcing changes to the Collaborative agreement. A vote must be taken by each district on the proposed language changes to the contract. No further discussion occurred.

Ms. White motioned to accept the proposed changes to the agreement with The Education Cooperative, Ms. Briggs second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes
Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Minutes

Ms. Laprade motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting on February 26, 2020, Mr. Bilafer second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes
Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Ms. Briggs motioned to approve the minutes from the meeting on March 4, 2020, Ms. Laprade second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes
Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Ms. White motioned to approve the minutes from the remote meeting on March 15, 2020, Ms. Briggs second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Donations

Dr. Pearrow motioned with grateful appreciation to approve a donation in the amount of \$3,025 from the Dedham Educational Partnership to the High School and Middle School Orchestra to support the purchase of two oboes and reeds, Mr. Bilafer second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes
Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Ms. White motioned with grateful appreciation to approve a donation in the amount of \$1,000 from the Alumni Association to Dedham High School to support the Dedham Storytellers program, Ms. Briggs second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes
Mayanne Briggs - Yes
Joshua Donati - Yes
Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes
Tracey White - Yes
Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes
Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Acknowledgements and Announcements

Supt. Welch noted that continued payments will be made to support The Education Collaborative

Mr. Bilafer acknowledged the thoughtful and considerate letters from seniors expressing concerns about the ending of their senior year. The Committee will try to provide clarity around this situation as it becomes available and will try to give them the best senior closing possible.

Ms. White expressed empathy to all students missing out on their final year in their current school.

Ms. White motioned to adjourn the remote meeting of April 1, 2020, Ms. Laprade second; a roll call vote was taken:

Steve Bilafer- Yes

Mayanne Briggs - Yes

Joshua Donati - Yes

Dr. Melissa Pearrow - Yes

Tracey White - Yes

Lisa Laprade, Vice-Chair - Yes

Kevin Coughlin, Chair - Yes

Motion passed 7-0

Remote meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.